

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-2, 4, 8-13 and 15 remain in this application. Claims 1, 8, 11-12 and 15 have been amended by this Amendment, as further discussed below.

Claim Objections

Claims 11 and 12 have been objected to. Note that, as set forth in Table II of the specification as filed, either or both of the third and sixth solutions may contain nitric acid, and that Claim 11 has been amended accordingly. Claim 12 has also been amended as per the Examiner's suggestion.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. 103

Claims 1-2, 4, 8-13 and 15 have been rejected as obvious in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,310,390 (Bradley et al.) in combination with U.S. Patent No. 3,053,691 (Hartman et al.) and U.S. Patent No. 5,750,014 (Stadler et al.). Bradley et al. is directed to a process for sealing anodic coatings on aluminum and simultaneously providing a protective coating to the anodized aluminum by impregnating the anodic coating with organic resin. In contrast, in the present invention the coating step is performed independently and non-simultaneously vis-à-vis the other process steps. For example, independent Claim 1 requires the third solution to be a coating solution, independent Claim 8 requires a fifth solution for sealing and a sixth solution for coating, and independent Claim 15 requires separate anodizing and sealing solutions. Claims 1, 8 and 15 have been amended to clarify this limitation. Moreover, Claims 1, 8 and 15 require a single process tank in which the various solutions are added and removed. In contrast, in Bradley et al. it is contemplated that the component to be treated is first anodized outside of the process vessel and thereafter immersed in the process vessel for simultaneous sealing and coating. *See, e.g.,* Bradley et al., col. 4, lines 26-30 and Example 1, steps 7-9.

In addition, Hartman et al. and Stadler et al. are primarily directed to electroplating metal parts. *See, e.g.,* the flow diagram at col. 1, lines 15-54 of Hartman et al. and the description of the use of a plating tank at col. 2, lines 59-65 of Stadler et al. Moreover, Stadler et al. and Hartman et al. do not disclose or suggest the use of separate storage tanks which feed solution into a single process tank, which in turn feed solution into a transition tank, as set forth in independent Claims 1, 8 and 15.

In view of the foregoing, one of ordinary skill in the art would not be motivated to combine the teachings of Bradley et al., Hartman et al. and Stadler et al., because the simultaneous use of coating and sealing solutions in Bradley et al. actually teaches away from the non-simultaneous use of the solutions in Hartman et al. and Stadler et al. It is improper to combine references where the references teach away from their combination. *See* MPEP § 2145 at p. 2100-162 (Rev. 2, May 2004) (citation omitted). In addition, the Examiner's proposed combination of the simultaneous use of sealing and coating solutions Bradley et al. with the non-simultaneous use of the solutions in Hartman et al.

and Stadler et al. would impermissibly change the basic principle of operation of Bradley et al., which is the simultaneous sealing and coating step. See MPEP § 2143.01 at p. 2100-132 (citation omitted) (the teachings of the references are insufficient to render claims *prima facie* obvious when the proposed modification or combination of the references would change the principle of operation of the prior art invention being modified). Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that independent Claims 1, 8 and 15, together with Claims 2 and 4 (ultimately dependent on Claim 1) and Claims 9-13 (ultimately dependent on Claim 8) are nonobvious and patentable over Bradley et al. in combination with Hartman et al. and Stadler et al.

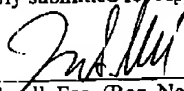
Conclusion

Based on the foregoing amendments and remarks, favorable consideration and allowance of all of the claims now present in the application are respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner require or consider it advisable that the specification, claims and/or drawings be further amended or corrected in formal respects in order to place the case in condition for final allowance, then it is respectfully requested that such amendment or correction be carried out by Examiner's Amendment and the case passed to issue. Alternatively, should the Examiner feel that a personal discussion might be helpful in advancing this case to allowance, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any required fees, including any extension and/or excess claim fees, any additional fees, or credit any overpayment, to Goodwin Procter LLP Deposit Account No. 06-0923.

Respectfully submitted for Applicant,



Louis S. Sorrell, Esq. (Reg. No. 32,439)
GOODWIN PROCTER LLP
599 Lexington Avenue
New York, NY 10022
(212) 459-7421